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JANUARY MEETING, 1896.

THE stated meeting was held on Thursday, the 9th instant, at three o'clock, P.M.; the President, CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS, LL.D., in the chair.

The record of the last meeting was read and approved; and the Librarian read the list of donors to the Library.

Mr. Francis Cabot Lowell, of Boston, was elected a Resident Member, and Leslie Stephen, LL.D., of London, England, a Corresponding Member.

Mr. Josiah P. Quincy was appointed to write a memoir of the late Rev. Octavius B. Frothingham, for publication in the Proceedings.

MR. ARTHUR LORD said that since the last meeting of the Society the bequest of the late Dr. George E. Ellis had been paid into the Treasury; and on his motion, it was —

Voted, That the instrument relating to the bequests and devises of Dr. George E. Ellis to this Society and dated on the twentieth day of December, A. D. 1895, signed and delivered to George S. Hale, Executor of the Will of said Ellis, by the Treasurer, the same having been accepted and approved by the Council and Committee appointed with full power to act on all matters connected with the bequests of said Ellis, be and hereby is ratified, confirmed, and adopted as the act and deed of this Society.

Dr. SAMUEL A. GREEN said that at the memorial meeting of the Historical Society, held on December 13, 1894, he was called upon to speak of Mr. Winthrop's connection with the Peabody Education Fund, and that he wished now to place permanently upon the records of the Society the tribute since paid to his memory by the Trustees of the Education Fund, only recently published. It seems desirable that the minute — which was prepared by Mr. Choate — should appear in the Proceedings of this Society, with which for so many years Mr.

Winthrop was identified, as well as in those of that Board, which equally claimed him as its foremost member; and accordingly he submitted a copy, as follows:—

The Trustees of the Peabody Education Fund, convened at their annual meeting for the year 1895, desire to put on record their profound regret at the death, since their last meeting, of their distinguished president, the Honorable Robert C. Winthrop, and their high appreciation of his great qualities of mind and heart, which were never exhibited to greater advantage than in his long and zealous devotion to the interests and affairs of the Trust as its chief executive officer during the whole period that has elapsed since its foundation.

His renowned career in the public service of his country and in the noblest pursuits of private life may well be reserved for a suitable biographer, but his relations to this Trust were so peculiar and of such transcendent importance to its welfare, that we may well pause in our deliberations to recall them. He was a warm personal friend of Mr. Peabody before the establishment of the Trust, and while that friendship and his great public and private repute might account for his original selection by our founder as a trustee, Mr. Peabody's designation of him as the permanent president of the Trust is to be ascribed to his thorough knowledge of the man, and of his fitness, by his long and frequent occupation of a similar position in other institutions, for guiding, controlling, and developing the affairs of the great charity which his generous heart intended this Trust to be. His wide and thorough knowledge of the whole country, to whose service he had given a large portion of his active life, and especially of the needs of the Southern people, among whom Mr. Peabody designed to distribute his bounty for the purposes of education, his admirable tact and skill in dealing with educational and charitable problems, naturally pointed him out to Mr. Peabody as the most competent adviser that he could call to his aid in the constitution of the Trust, and the proper person to preside over its future. And so in his original letter, in which he declared the general objects of the Trust to be "the promotion and encouragement of intellectual, moral, and industrial education among the young of the more destitute portions of the Southern and Southwestern States of our Union," while leaving the details and organization of the Trust wholly to the trustees, he requested that the chairman might be Mr. Winthrop, to whom he referred as "the distinguished and valued friend to whom I am so much indebted for cordial sympathy, careful consideration, and wise counsel in this matter."

The result, during a presidency of twenty-seven successive years, has fully justified the selection. It may be said, with truth and moderation, that the great success of Mr. Peabody's intentions for the amelioration

of the destitution and sufferings of the Southern people by education has been largely due to the ceaseless and vigilant devotion of Mr. Winthrop, during these twenty-seven years, to the business of the Trust. Not a school was aided but after careful consideration of its merits by him. Not a dollar was expended without his serious consideration of the utility of the outlay in the direction intended by Mr. Peabody.

His lofty character, his courteous bearing, his uniform kindness in all his dealings with the trustees over whom he presided, endeared him to each member of the Trust as a warm personal friend, and the light which his experience and knowledge shed upon every question that arose for deliberation always made the task of his associates an easy one. We felt that whatever Mr. Winthrop approved, after the study and reflection which he insisted upon giving to every measure projected, must, of course, be right. It was a very great thing for an institution like this to be presided over by such a man, who for a quarter of a century was willing to give to its continual service the best powers with which he was endowed.

The Winthrop Training School in South Carolina, which, by Act of the Legislature of that State, has been transformed and developed into the Winthrop Normal and Industrial College, will stand as a permanent memorial of the great service rendered to the country by Mr. Winthrop in the exercise of his duties as our president. That such an institution of learning, fostered by this Trust, and sustained by the aid of the State of South Carolina, whose interests are so much involved in the advancement of education in the South, should have received his name, was always a great source of pride and satisfaction to him; but his interest in it on that account did not surpass the deep-seated concern and solicitude which he always felt for the success of all the institutions scattered through the Southern States, which were made the object of our founder's bounty.

His work in carrying out the proud and noble designs of Mr. Peabody was but a fitting sequel to the earnest interest which throughout his prolonged public career he had manifested for the welfare of the people of the Southern States; and it was no small satisfaction to him that incidentally Mr. Peabody's bounty relieved, to some extent, that emancipated race which for centuries had been deprived by law of all possibility of education. As an object lesson, the beneficial results of gifts to such schools as Hampton and Tuskegee made good his own words when he said: "Slavery is but half abolished, emancipation is but half completed, while millions of freemen with votes in their hands are left without education." Whatever speculations may be indulged in as to the future of that race in America, this sentiment of Mr. Winthrop's will ever remain the only safe guide for public or private treatment of the vast and complicated subject; and his wise

utterances, the result always of careful study and reflection, as they appear in the published Proceedings of the Trust since its foundation, will always serve as a valuable contribution to the advancement of education in the South among both races.

We shall ever look back upon our association with Mr. Winthrop in the Trust as a rare privilege and a great honor, and can only hope to approximate in the conduct of its affairs to his fidelity and his wisdom.

MELVILLE W. FULLER.

WILLIAM A. COURTENAY.

JOSEPH H. CHOATE.

Mr. HENRY LEE then presented, in behalf of Mrs. Edward C. Cabot, a collection of unpublished letters written by Jonathan Sewall, and said : —

This box contains thirty-eight letters from Jonathan Sewall, remembered as the Attorney-General of the Province before the Revolution, as one of the most distinguished of the Refugees, as the husband of Esther Quincy, and as the bosom friend of John Adams, who says of him : —

“He was a gentleman and a scholar, he possessed a lively wit, a brilliant imagination, great subtlety of reasoning, and an insinuating eloquence. As a lawyer, his influence with judges and juries was as great as was consistent with an impartial administration of justice.

“I know not that I have ever delighted more in the friendship of any man, or more deeply regretted an irreconcilable difference in judgment in public opinions. He had virtues to be esteemed, qualities to be loved, and talents to be admired.”

Attorney-General Sewall left Boston for England early in 1775, endured a weary exile in that country until 1788, when he removed to Halifax, was appointed Judge of Admiralty for Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and died, as John Adams believed, of a broken heart at St. John in 1796.

Thirty-four of these letters are addressed to Mr. Thomas Robie, of Marblehead, son of Dr. Thomas Robie and Mehitable Sewall, and cousin to the writer.

The first letter is dated 1757, and the last 1789; and while not very interesting, they add to our previous knowledge of the dreary homelessness of these Refugees.

Their sons were rewarded for the loyalty of their fathers, — Mr. Robie's rising through three responsible offices to be

Master of the Rolls for Nova Scotia ; while Jonathan Sewall became Chief Justice, and Stephen, Solicitor-General of Quebec.

There are four letters to other friends, and there are in the box three letters not written by Sewall, of a satirical turn, signed "Lindamira."

Mrs. Edward C. Cabot, who presents these letters to the Society, is a daughter of Hon. Samuel Edmund Sewall (H. C. 1817), remembered by some of you as a most refined and benevolent man ; she is of the eighth generation of Sewalls in New England, and reckons among her ancestors Winslows, Dummers, Hulls, Walleys, Quincys, and Robies.

These letters were addressed to her great-grandfather Robie.¹

CAMBRIDGE, 25th Sep^r, 1773.

DEAR COZ., — In answer to your last I have to acquaint you that I had given M^r Mansfield my opinion, sealed up, before the rec^t of yours. Whether it makes for you or against you I know not. The Law, M^r Robie, the Law, I say, is no respecter of persons ; it is founded upon the fix'd basis of right reason ; therefore, Sir, the Law, Sir, is *semper eadem*, it is permanent, it cannot alter, that is to say, it will not alter, to please any, it is not to be trifled with, it is to be honor'd, it ought not to be blasphemed as it has been by *somebody* who once presumed to compare the *legal* decisions of a *certain person* who shall be nameless, to a treatise of one *Hopkins on the Goodness of Sin* ; horrid ! but no matter.

Now for Loring ; you say he is a cheating dog ; he says you are a lying son of a b—— ; you say he agreed to transport your bricks @ 25/ O. T. 3/4 M. to be paid in goods ; he says he agreed @ 30/ to be paid in cash ; now the Law, like a sovereign umpire, steps it [in ?] &, in the course of a few years, before the end of the present century, if the writ don't abate by the death of either party, decides the difference,

¹ Most of the letters presented by Mr. Lee relate to private affairs, and are written in too familiar a style to admit of publication ; but there are several which are of general and permanent interest, for the light they throw on the personal character of the writer, and on the opinions and feelings of the Loyalists. The first two of the letters now printed were addressed to Mr. Robie while he was living at Marblehead and actively engaged in trade. The others addressed to him were written after he went to Halifax ; and there are two letters to his sister Mrs. John Higginson, — one written while she was living in Halifax, and the other after her return to Salem. The letters now given are printed in full, with the exception of four letters from which only extracts have been taken, for the reason above indicated. In printing, a few explanatory notes have been added. — EDS.

to the dissatisfaction, chagrin, & loss of both parties, — a certain proof that it avoids both extremes, & takes the middle way, and, *in medio tutissimus ibis*, — you know. Here you see & must, in spite of your prejudices, adore & admire the wisdom & beauty of the Law. You observe, that you hope I tendred the 25/ so as to prevent any costs; but here again I must tell you, M^r Robie, you are no lawyer; indeed Sir, you are no lawyer, otherwise you would have known that the Law does not admit of such a tender, after y^e action is commenced; and you will remember his action was commenced before you applied to your lawyer. This can be done, and I shall do it, — at October Court the money may be bro^t into Court & there lodged, and a rule of the Court may be made, that if the plaintiff will not accept it, he shall proceed at his peril; but in this case the costs for the writ, service, entry, travel & attendance must also be left in Court, & then if he will proceed, he will recover no other costs of the Inferior or Superior Court, but must pay your costs, if he finally recovers no more than 25/. This, by reason of your blindness, may possibly, & probably will, appear strange to you; but when I have leisure to explain the grounds & reasons, you will own it to be right beautiful, and beautifully right. At present be content silently to adore (I don't mean idolize) it as an incomprehensible mystery, too profound to be fathom'd by the short line of the understanding of the *lay gens*. No Sir, it is fathomable only by those intellects whose naturally squab-thick powers have been, as it were, wire-drawn to a sufficient longitude by diurnal & nocturnal porings, poundings, dreamings, sleepings, cursings & swearings over codes, pandects, digests, institutes, abridgments, reports, entries, commentaries, actions, pleas, replications, rejoinders, surrejoinders, rebutters, surrebutters, &c. in infinitum. This is but a faint glimpse of the immense sea of legal — what shall I call it? — chaotical confusion of primary principals of abstract ratiocination, thro' which for the tedious space of 3 lives, or 21 years, we toil, tug, labour, plunge, paddle, scramble, wallow, & from which, per varios casus, per *tot discrimina rerum*, we at length emerge with souls fitly enlarged & enlightened for assuming the guardianship of the lives, liberties, & properties of our ignorant fellow men. Think of this, Sir, & then let conscience say whether it can be thought a hard matter, if at the end of a tedious lawsuit the poor lawyer gets barely the oyster, provided the shells, by the equitable decision of the Law, are equally divided between the contending parties, & thereby their warm untractable tempers are cooled down & rendred humble & governable, and cordial, sympathizing pity, love, & harmony take place of bitter enmity, rage, hatred & discord. Oh! don't wish for the oyster, you are great gainers, sufficiently great, without it.

I could enlarge & dwell till midnight on the subject, but certain movements within, & the clattering of dishes, plates, knives & forks

without, together with the culinary effluvia gratefully titillating the olfactory nerves, give notice to the cerebrum, or cerebellum, or sensorium, that dinner waits for

Your hum. servant,

JO^N. SEWALL.

ESQ^R ROBIE.

P. S. I saw Loring last week for the first time, & he absolutely refuseth to take anything short of 30/ O. T. & M. freight, — an unconscionable dog, say you.

CAMBRIDGE, 8th Nov^r, 1773.

MR. THO^S ROBIE, Esq^r,

SIR, — . . . Nov^r. 12. In answer to what I wrote you respecting your *antagoness* Loring, you remind me of the fable of the boys & the frogs, — a very good fable, — but nothing less or more than the spleen or the small pox or the d—l could ever have painted to your bewildred imagination the *preposterous* (a word which you may remember Churchill great in arms apply'd to my breeches) idea of my making sport of your death, or even of your lightest affliction. Why did you, or could you, think because my pen frisk'd and gambol'd a little at the expence of my own fraternity, that therefore I was inattentive to your interest? I pity & heartily forgive you. I shall now give you a serious account of your case with Loring.

13th. Dear Coz.

When you apply'd to me as your counsel at law to defend an action commenced against you by one Loring, you told me *he had then sued you* for the freight of bricks at 30/ O. T. & M., whereas you agreed for 25/ to be paid in goods. You thought you could prove the price, but was doubtful whether you could prove the agreement to pay in goods. It was then too late to make a tender w^{ch} you could have any advantage of on the trial. This I knew, & if I did not mention it to you, I suppose it was because it could do no good, & would probably produce more sarcastical squibs at the *wise rules & principals* of the Law; but I let you know that if the money which you said was due was *tendred* or *lodged* in Court together with his costs to that time, it would prevent his recovering any further costs, but that you would recover costs if he sho^d refuse to take what you offer'd, & you sho^d prove the agreem^t for 25/. Soon after you sent me £12 lawf^l money. As Loring was not come up, M^r Quincy, his attorney, agreed to continue the action, & said he would advise him to take it. I saw Loring after y^e cause was continued & offer'd him the money, but he refused to take it. At October Court I lodged the debt & costs in Court, amounting to £14. 4. 8,¹ and

¹ From a subsequent letter it appears that the amount paid into court was for "boating 69 M. Bricks @ 3/4 — £11. 10. 0" and for "costs £2. 14. 8." These figures show the depreciation of the Massachusetts paper currency at that time. — Eds.

a rule of Court was made that if he would proceed further, it sho^d be at his peril, that is at the peril of paying costs.

Nov^r 15th before breakfast. His attorney moved for a continuance, but afterwards, having thought better of the matter, he came into Court & took y^e money & was nonsuited, and thus the lawsuit ended.

After breakfast. And now, Sir, let me tell you I have done as much for your interest as the nature of your case admitted. Had you applied to me sooner I could have put you in a way of saving the costs by making a tender before he could bring his action, but then you must have made a journey to Hingham on purpose, which would have cost you as much; but then, you will say, that dog Loring would not have been the better for it. True; nor is he the better for the costs you have paid now. The Clerk, Sheriff & lawyer have got it all & as much more out of his pocket. This, I hope, will afford you some *Christian* consolation. I own, had he got the 25/ 3^d M. clear, it would have been provoking, but to have cleared that & the costs too would have been the d—l. I should not have wondered, in such a case, if you had cursed him with the intire curse of Bishop Ernulphus, but, as I have shewn above, the case is quite otherwise; he, to your comfort, is as great a loser as you. Now don't take hold here again by the wrong handle. I don't mean to ridicule or insult; no, far from it; but I would have you remember it as long as you live; and if you take it as you ought to take all afflictions, it will in the end yield you the *peaceable, saving* fruits of Wisdom. For upon the word & honor of an *honest* lawyer (if you won't deny the hypothesis), a gentleman, & a Christian, I solemnly declare it to be my firm opinion, that if two men have a dispute, where the difference is not more than 6 or 8£ lawful money, & both obstinately resolve to contest it at law and accordingly rush into the law, whether they are both honest men, or both knaves, or one an honest man & the other a knave, it is morally, physically, legally and absolutely impossible for them to get out again without being both losers. This is a truth which I wish all my friends, & you among the rest, to attend to with seriousness and reverence. Experimentia docet, but bought Wit may be too dearly purchased, sat verbum sapienti. Finis. Only, upon supposition you want any more bricks, let me advise you to reduce your contract to writing & let it be signed by the other party. It is but little trouble. Three lines does it. And all ground for litigation is taken away. And if you have any dispute & want my advice, don't wait till you are sued, which is like going to a physician after the disease is obstinately rooted, or like going to the parson when the D—l is come.

No more at present, so I remain

Yours till Death (the great [*illegible*] of all things).

JO^N. SEWALL.

BOSTON, 7th June, 1775.

WELL, Cousin Tom, — And so you are at Halifax, the renowned seat of my maritime jurisdiction. I wish you were here, tho' I don't know whether it would be best. If you have your *flocks & herds*, as well as your little ones, with you, you are well off. I wish I had mine, but I am not discouraged. I don't fear starving; we have plenty of salt beef & pork & flour in the town, & of fish in the sea. We get fresh meat now & then, & have good stuff in our gardens. Cheer up, Robie. I think I see daylight, tho' it has been a long, dark, stormy night. I begin to hope the storm has almost spent itself; but how or when it will end is yet in the womb of Fate. As to my situation, which you wish to be informed of, I can only say, I am scituated in Tom Boylston's house in School Street, formerly Col^o Wendell's.¹ Thus the world goes round. I have a very convenient house & garden, & my family are in good health & spirits. I hear so many stories from without that I know not which to believe, & therefore I believe none. Whenever I have any thing certain to communicate, I will take the first opportunity to write you. At present, believe nothing you hear, for a lying Spirit is gone forth, & lyes are as plenty as ever pigeons or tom cod were. We are still coop'd up in the town, & I spend my time in scolding, mourning, laughing, cursing, swearing, & praying; so that what the body wants in variety is amply made up to the mind. The scenes now exhibited on the stage afford matter for setting all the passions of the human mind in motion, & accordingly they all turn up in their turns. How long, O Lord, how long, when shall the wickedness of the wicked come to an end? What do those abandoned wretches deserve who have thus reduced a whole country from peace & happiness to confusion & misery? Yesterday I assisted in bearing my good friend & neighbour M^r Borland² to that silent mansion where the wicked cease from troubling & where the weary are at rest. He lost his life by a fall in attempting to get upon the top of his house to see an expedition to Hog Island, which one day will make a ludicrous figure in the History of the American Rebellion. Thus he fell a martyr to the times; rest his soul. I am glad to find you are so much at ease in your retreat. I sometimes wish myself with you, & could I leave Boston with propriety, I believe I should take up my residence at Halifax untill these calamities are overpast; for tho' I have some glimmering hopes, yet, from the continued frenzy of the people, the prospect is gloomy; here & there a light spot, but still the clouds are black &

¹ Opposite to King's Chapel. — Eds.

² John Borland, a prominent merchant and Loyalist in Boston. He died, June 5, at the age of 47. The expedition to Hog Island was on May 27. See *New England Chronicle*, June 8-15, 1775; *Sabine's American Loyalists*, vol. i. p. 237; *Paige's History of Cambridge*, p. 493. — Eds.

heavy, & the wild tempest roars. In short my hopes & fears prevail alternately. I don't see the way out, & yet I think we can't be far from the end of the lane. When we are out, I will give you by way of amusement, some of the many entertaining anecdotes with which the scene is interspersed. I wish Yorick was alive & upon the spot to write a Sentimental Blockade. It would afford an infinite fund of matter for his infinite fund of humour. Oh! with what fine touches would such a pen describe the bewitching charms of the great goddess Liberty, how would he paint her worshippers, some plunging themselves, their wives & children in certain poverty & destruction, quitting or wasting their substance, strolling about like pilgrims, not knowing whither they are bound; others plundering & destroying all around them, killing horses, stealing cattle, sheep, money, goods, burning houses, barns & hay,—the whole troop rushing into the arms of Slavery, & all in honour of the afores^d goddess Liberty, as Indians cut & mangle themselves to please the Devil. It will certainly be a fine field for somebody.

Pray present M^{rs} Sewall's with my affectionate regards to M^{rs} Robie & your little ones. Tell her to keep up a good heart. The times must alter, & they can't grow much worse.

Yours sincerely,

JOÑ. SEWALL.

M^R ROBIE.

GARRISON at BOSTON, July 15th, 1775.

DEAR ROBIE, — Musketry, bombs, great guns, redoubts, lines, batteries, enfilades, battles, sieges, murder, plague, pestilence, famine, rebellion, & the Devil have at length brought me to a determination to quit a scene with which I am thoroughly cloy'd, & to retreat to the cold climate of Halifax,—a spot which I flatter myself will afford peace at least, because it is not worth quarrelling about. It is not despair which drives me away, but because I am heartily tired. I have faith like a mountain of mustard seeds that rebellion will shrink back to its native Hell, & that Great Britain will rise superior to all the gasconade of the little, wicked American politicians, but I have a wife & children to take care of, & I fear a long winter for which I can see no provision, and I think it my duty to repair to my station. I expect to embark, bag & baggage, in about a fortnight or three weeks. I have engaged M^{rs} Jo. Gerrish's house for one year. M^r Spooner will tell you everything that I could write in the way of news. Present my affectionate regards to M^{rs} Higginson, & tell her I don't write her because I expect to come unto her shortly, & see her face to face, that I hope to spend a social winter with your & her fireside, but I have learnt not to depend upon any thing sublunary. M^{rs} Ben

Gerrish will be afflicted to hear of the death of her poor brother Jn^o Cotton; he dy'd this morning of a dissentary, the same disorder that carry'd off his eldest son last week, & which prevails much in town. He was a good man & the event is melancholy; but Death has so long stalked among us that he is become much less terrible to me than he once was. Habit has a great influence over that mystical substance, the human mind. Funerals are now so frequent that for a month past you met as many dead folks as live ones in Boston streets, & we pass them with much less emotion & attention than we used to pass dead sheep & oxen in days of yore when such sights were to be seen in our streets. How the times are changed! If a quarter of a poor, half-starved dead sheep is carry'd thro' the street, people fly to their doors & windows to view the wonderful sight, in the same manner as they formerly did to see the funeral of a person of distinction, while in return a funeral passes along as unheeded as ever a panier of pigeons did in the afternoon of a hot day, when the morning price was a half penny a dozen, & this is all natural eno', for when there is not a supply of victuals for all the survivors will feel less regret at seeing the crowd thin off. I do verily believe that war, pestilence, & famine, however horrid they have been thought to be, form the best school of philosophy that ever was invented. If I was to tarry here six months longer, I believe I sho^d grow fond of them; & I had only my own belly to fill, I should certainly try the experiment. I have a strong desire to see the end of the play, of which I have seen but two acts as yet; and by the scenery the next will be much more crowded with smoke, fire, and bloodshed & such like ornaments of tragedy; and it's not impossible that the finishing stroke of the last act may be the death of the last person of the drama, like Swift's *Tom Thumb* the Great. I sometimes scold, but I oftener laugh; & I assure you I have never from the beginning felt the least disposition to cry. Every thing I see is laughable, cursable, and damnable; my pew in the church is converted into a pork tub; my house into a den of rebels, thieves & lice; my farm in possession of the very worst of all God's creation; my few debts all gone to the devil with my debtors. I have just parted with my coach horses for £24 ster^s, which cost me £40 last fall & £20 more in keeping, while the circuit of my riding ground has been confined to my own yard or little more. I parted with them because they were starving in the midst of British armys & British fleets in the most plentiful country in the world. All this is *right*, says Doctor Pangloss, & this is the best of all possible worlds, & the garrison of Boston the best of all possible garrisons, as the castle of Thundertentrunch was the best of all possible castles. Be it so, with all my heart. I like it well enough, if it was not for the hen & chickens; if they were out of the way, I should feel that happy indifference which would carry me up

to the mouth of a cannon, or to an assembly room, just as the call happened to be, without a wish to disturb my tranquillity. I could say, but I will keep silence, and be dumb while the wicked is before me.

Adieu.

JOÑ. SEWALL.

Boston, 12th August, 1775.

LOVING COZEN, — In my last I acquainted you with (or at least hinted to you) my design of spending the winter at Halifax. I am now all off, & hearing of the small pox, & for divers other good causes & considerations me thereunto moving, more especially in consideration of the sum of two thousand pounds sterl^s money of Great Britain, from me, out of pocket already lost & gone to the Devil, as a reward for my endeavours to save my countrymen from ruin & destruction, have consented, determined, bargained, & agreed to quit America during the present scene of distraction, & to transport myself, my wife, children, man servant, & maid servant in the good snow called the [*blank*], whereof Robinson is master for this present voyage to London; & so God send the s^d snow a safe & speedy passage. Amen.

If we reach our desired port in safety I shall depend much on seeing your phiz. I shall take a house at Westminster end for the winter, in what particular street, or at which corner, or what part of that street, I cannot determine, but if you enquire for Squire Wronghead & family lately from the country of Independents on a *journey to London*, you will find us out without any difficulty. To be serious, I am really going bag and baggage. I am discouraged at the prospect before me. I see infatuation, distraction, & hair-brain'd blindness on one side, and determined resolution & resistless power on the other, & for my wife & children I dread the shock. I have doubts whether effectual measures will be taken this fall, & in that case I fear that Halifax itself will taste the bitter pill, such is the epidemical nature of the frenzy that after what I have seen, I know not where it will stop, till the only proper remedy is apply'd. I doubt not a cure, but I am uncertain when; & I have seen, heard & felt enough of the rabies; I wish to be out of the noise. Your letters by Hunter & by the packet, with the two cheeses & the butter came safe to hand, for which you have my hearty thanks. I sho^d have wrote you by the packet, but she sailed two days sooner than I was assured she would sail, to my great mortification. The certificate you wish for I have not obtained; the reasons you shall know if we live to meet in London, where I doubt not I can answer all the purposes of a certificate. If you pursue your London scheme, I can't but think it wo^d be better for your wife & sister, with their families to return home soon. Salem & Mbhead are quiet as yet. There they will find plenty of provisions & cheap; & sho^d any thing disagreeable take place, they can retire into the country. Women & children will be

in danger only of inconveniences. Besides, M^{rs} Robie & M^{rs} Higginson will derive some advantage from certain connections which I cannot think of without indignation.

But "when it is to combat evil,
'Tis lawful to employ the Devil."

On the other hand, Halifax is in a cold climate, long winters, provisions poor, scarce, & dear; add to this the danger (as I apprehend) that the *flame* may catch there notwithstanding the *coldness* of the climate, & what will be their situation then? Only suppose your back country should adopt the humane Massachushtes plan of starving Halifax into a compliance with Continental measures! and the more unreasonable this appears the more probable it is. Every step hitherto taken has been to reason a stumbling block & to common sense foolishness. Indeed, I think if they return home, they will choose the least evil of two. Your & M^{rs} Higginson's letters for Salem & Mblead I put on board a ship bound thither with a cargo of transports from our almshouse. They were carried to the General's & open'd, & in the mean time the ship sail'd, so that I now have them in my possession open. I will seal & forward them, to be open'd again I suppose by the rebels. M^{rs} Sewall joins in love to M^{rs} Robie & chicks. Better times is the wish of

Yours sincerely.

JOÑ. SEWALL.

M^R ROBIE.

NO. 16 KNIGHTSBRIDGE, 17th Aug., 1776.

DEAR ROBIE, — You sailed from Portsm^o 24th May, as I suppose by your last letter; the Commission^{rs} are now arrived in 25 days, which gives you 7 weeks, & no news of you yet. God grant you mayn't have fallen into the hands of the rebels. Heavens! I had rather hear the Devil had got you, for I believe he has more honesty, honor, virtue & humanity than they. I congratulate you on the pleasing prospects American affairs begin to wear, *rejoicete* & *upliftite oculos*, for your redemption draweth nigh. Nothing new has occur'd since your departure, except that my man Richard took it into his head in return for all my kindness to break up my house in the night between the 19th & 20th of June, & rob me of all my plate, table cloths, napkins, towels, shirts, my wife's smewys, &c., &c. to the value of 80 or 90£, for which he was hanged at Tyburn on Wednesday last, & I hope his soul is happy. I petitioned his Majesty for the poor fellow's life, but the crime being of so dangerous a kind, burglary by a servant, my prayer could not be granted. I believe he was drawn into it by a bad woman, who nevertheless had art enough to manage matters so as to save her own neck, & leave poor Richard, as the Devil also did, in the lurch. I hope & believe Heaven makes all the allowance for him that I do; if it does, the worst is over with him.

You remember how I scolded at you for not bringing me some fish from Halifax. I expect 3 or 4 quintals by the first vessel that sails after your arrival. If you have forgot it, pray send by the first opportunity after the receipt of this, & let me know where I shall pay for it. You don't know how I long for it every Saturday. I bought a box of oyl a month ago, in high expectation of receiving the fish before this time. Dear Robie, don't fail.

I shall write you again as soon as I know where you are, but not before. I have taken up a letter from M^{rs} Robie to you, & open'd it, as it was directed to me in your absence. The bill inclosed is a second, & I suppose the first came to your hands before you left England. I mentioned it to S^r Will^m Pepperrell, & he supposed it was paid. I have not yet seen M Paice, but intend it, & if it be as I suppose I shall destroy it.

Our kindest love to M^{rs} Robie, M^{rs} Higginson, & the little ones, & accept the same from

Your hearty friend & kinsman.

JOÑ. SEWALL.

M^R ROBIE.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE, March 12th 1777.

DEAR COZ., — . . . I lately sent via N. York a long letter to M^{rs} Hig^{son}, part of which was wrote in Nov^r last, upon a subject the most melancholy I have ever had to write upon, — the death of my dear, amiable little Betsey. Oh Robie, it was a severe stroke. I feel it yet, & shall feel it till death puts a final period to all sensation; but “what avails superfluous sorrow?” if I can't forget her I must not trouble my friends with her; they have troubles enough of their own, & so, farewell, dear Shade!

I hope my letter to M^{rs} Higginson will not fall into the hands of the rebels, for I should be loth their malice should be gratified, as I know it would be, by reading, & perhaps printing the heart-felt pangs which in the bitterness of soul I penned for the perusal of a sympathizing friend. I lately saw in one of their newspapers a printed letter of the venerable D^r Caner,¹ wherein he expresseth his (groundless) fears lest he should be left to poverty & want in his old age; & the humane publisher (one of the Adams's or D^r Cooper, I suppose) subjoins to the letter an invocation to Heaven or Hell, I don't know which, that such may be the fate of all Torys, that is, of all who would not join in a wicked rebellion. What unfeeling brutes! I wrote 3 or 4 letters to M^r Brenton,² all which, I suppose, fell into the hands of the American

¹ Rector of King's Chapel. He went to Halifax on the evacuation of Boston by the British troops. — Eds.

² Presumably James Brenton, one of the Rhode Island Loyalists. He went to Halifax, and was a notary public there in September, 1775. See Sabine's *American Loyalists*, vol. i. p. 254. — Eds.

pirates, as he writes me he has never rec^d them; as they were merely on business, would not their committees, if they had a spark of generosity in their composition, have forwarded them? but no, they have discovered only the most barbarous, inhuman, unchristian, diabolical sentiments from the beginning. God forgive me if I am wanting in charity; but before him I declare that in my conscience I believe the plotters, instigators & cherishers of this most unnatural, causeless, destructive rebellion to be the worst set of men that have ever lived from the days of Lot to this day; they never appeared to me to have acted what they thought right, but to have been abandoned to all sense of moral & civil obligation, & to have given themselves up to the guidance of malice, pride, envy, hatred, & every other vicious principle that can blacken the human heart, but thank Heaven, they have almost fill'd up the measure of their iniquity, & will very soon reap their reward. Pray let me hear from you every opportunity, & to convince me you are still living in this *mundaine sphere*, touch a little upon sublunary subjects, & send a few quint^{ls} of good fish, do you mind. Greet your fire-side, M^{rs} Hig^{son}, M^r Porter,¹ & all friends. I shall go into the country this summer upon the æconomic plan. You shall hear where when I know myself. Wherever I am, believe me

Yours sincerely.

JOⁿ. SEWALL.

If the rebels catch this, I believe they will hardly think it worth printing; however, if [they] should, they are welcome, & then you may read it in print. I take care to give them no information as to matters & things; but I advise them to lay down y^e weapons of their rebellion immediately, or the D—l will come, & then it will be too late to pray.

THO^s ROBIE, Esq.

LONDON, 4th March, 1778.

MY DEAR M^{RS} HIGGINSON,² — The last letter I had the pleasure of receiving from you was dated in June last, & just before I went out

¹ Samuel Porter, a native of Danvers, and a graduate of Harvard College in the Class of 1763. He was afterward an attorney-at-law in Salem, and a Refugee. He died in London in 1798. See Sabine's *American Loyalists*, vol. ii. pp. 197, 198. — Eds.

² Mrs. Higginson, whose maiden name was Mehetabel Robie, was a sister of Thomas Robie, and widow of John Higginson of Salem. She went to Halifax in May, 1775, with her only surviving child, a daughter, ten years of age, and her brother's family. There she remained until May, 1782, when she returned to Massachusetts. She died in January, 1818, at the age of 94, "having for many years, in connection with her daughter, kept a school of great repute." (See *Historical Collections of the Essex Institute*, vol. v. p. 39.) In the *Pickering Papers*, belonging to the Massachusetts Historical Society, are nine letters from Mrs. Higginson to Colonel Pickering and four letters from him to her. — Eds.

into the *country* to *spend* the *summer*, which was in August last, for by the bye, you must know we have our *country* & our *town* residence, like our betters, & like them, for you know it would be foolish to ape them by halves, we went to our *country* residence at the *latter* end of *summer*; & let me add, for the parenthesis is now so long that it is no matter how much longer it is, our *country* residence was at Bristol, a city containing about ninety thousand inhabitants, & which carries on more trade than the whole continent of America; just before we left London, I say, I recieved a letter from your eccentric brother, acquainting me with his intentions of soon quitting Halifax for N. York, or Nova Zembla, or the Lord knows where, & from that time I have been waiting with the utmost impatience to hear from some of you, somewhere, wishing to write you, if I knew where to find you. But a few days since our friend Porter,¹ who, by the way, is the very same, identical, numerical, velvet-breechical Porter that he was when you last saw him, without any other variation or shadow of change than the dampness of the climate would, in the same time, have made in a marble statue, the same rough diamond he was first formed; he called upon me, & told me he had recieved a letter from you at Halifax, from whence I conclude this will find you there, for I presume the events of the last campaign have not determined you to return to Salem immediately. However, don't despond. Things have not gone, I own, just as I expected, but still, I think they are in a good way. Slow & sure, to people not in a hurry, is a comforting motto. Don't be startled at the plan of reconciliation. I verily believe it to be a wise plan, & that it will be attended with the happiest consequences, whether the Congress accept the terms, or not. I caution you, because my gloomy & angry countrymen here seem to think every thing is given up, & cry, We are undone. Opposition, on the other hand, say the terms are trifling & nothing is given up. I have often seen two warm partys in a private dispute equally angry at an award of arbitrators, which I thought perfectly just & equitable. The two partys, in their judgments, were upon the opposite extremes, but the arbitrators took the middle, where truth & justice lay, — so I think Lord North has done in this grand national dispute, & I don't at all regard the clamors of fiery partizans on either side. The terms now offered are, I verily believe, the same that would have been granted if Gen^l Burgoin had never *convented*, & if America had been conquered and reduced to the most abject submission; and in the name of humanity why should more blood be shed on either side for form's sake? If the Americans will yet insist on independence the whole world will justify this kingdom in reducing them by any & every means that the art of war points out; if they give it up, & are content with the removal of every grievance complained of as the ground of the rebellion,

¹ See note, *ante*, p. 418. — Eds.

& with the amplest security for their English rights & liberties, surely it is best to terminate a bloody war as speedily as possible.

April 1st, 1778. No opportunity for conveyance having offered since I began my letter, it has lain by, as you perceive, near a month, & now I think it will go, but where it will find you is uncertain. M^r Salter tells me you were at Halifax when he left it, but that he heard from M^r Porter you were about removing home; if so, this probably will never reach you, but it shall take its chance, lest you should think I have forgot you, as you seem to have forgotten me. Why did not you, nor your cross brother, write me by M^r Newton or M^r Salter? Your neglecting two such fine opportunities is a mystery I cannot unravel; but I hope you will soon. I shall set out next Monday, bag & baggage for Bristol, there to remain till the restoration of peace, & perhaps till the restoration of all things, for if a French war takes place, as is generally expected, I have no expectation of seeing America these ten years, if ever. But perhaps I may be as much out in my judgment now as I have been in every instance from the commencement of the American troubles. However, I am determined to possess my soul in patience. I know I am at least half thro' the journey of life; & if I can but see my two dear boys¹ upon their own legs, I care not three farthings whether I end it in England or in America. I long earnestly to see many of my valuable friends there, but whether I am ever to be gratified is so uncertain that I can form no judgment about it. I still wish *you* had never left Salem, & should you return, I think you would act wisely. *You* can have nothing to fear, & I am sure your life would be more comfortable. Greet your second self with a kiss, accept M^{rs} Sewall's best wishes, & believe me

Your affect^o friend & kinsman.

JOÑ. SEWALL.

BRISTOL, 11th Febr, 1780.

MY DEAR LACONIC COZ., — . . . I have nothing to write on but politics, and as that is a subject you so very prudently avoid, I shall most scrupulously follow your example, and I believe you are right, for I have every reason to think some of the most interesting letters I have wrote to Halifax & New York have miscarry'd. Therefore I am determined to observe your wise maxim, *Least said is soonest mended*, tho' as Ash Wednesday happened this week I could not help adding some occasional curses to the catalogue of the day. I cursed, but *Howe* I cursed, guess you. I thank you for your kind advice respecting my repairing to Halifax to receive my *coto* of the profits upon condemnation of prizes; but I assure you I could not finger a farthing of them if

¹ Jonathan Sewall, afterward Chief Justice of Lower Canada, and Stephen Sewall, afterward Solicitor-General of the same Province. — Eds.

I were upon the spot, as my commission expressly prohibits my taking any fee or gratuity whatever on pain of forfeiture. Notwithstanding this, believe me, were it not for my children I should long ago have removed to Halifax, & received the whole of my salary to my own use, upon which I think I could live better there than upon $\frac{3}{4}$ ths here, but for their sakes I must tarry here yet a little longer. I grew so tired of living with a family at lodgings that I am now again a householder in *Trinity Street*, Bristol. I was formerly in *Unity Street*, from whence I removed hither. Whether this is a change from *heresy* to *orthodoxy* or *vice versâ*, or whether according to St Athanasius they are *both the same*, & so I remain in *statu quo*, or in *quomino*, as our country pedagogue express'd it, I leave you to determine.

I rec^d your favors of 23rd Nov^r, 1778, and 30th Jan^y, 1779, the last of which you'll observe bears date the very day after the date of mine to you, since which I have wrote you two or three.

We have in Bristol D^r Gardner, Gov^r Oliver, Mess^{rs} Lechmere, Vassal, Faneuil, Barns & familys, M^{rs} Borland, Mess^{rs} Simpson & Waldo, &c., &c., so that we don't want for American acquaintance. I wish you wo^d take another trip, & say, how d'ye. M^{rs} Sewell, Jenny, & Sam join in good wishes to your fireside; finally & lastly, to finish & conclude & say no more, but to have done,

I am your obliged kinsman.

JOÑ. SEWELL.

Couragè.

TRINITY ST^r, BRISTOL, 11th Mar. '82.

. . . You persist in spelling my name Sewall. I have repeatedly informed you that upon examining the Herald's Office, and a strict enquiry in the county from whence we originated I am fully convinced the name is Sewell. Accordingly Sam^l & I have for several years past conformed to y^e true family way of spelling our name. Our great g. father certainly did not know how to spell his own name; if he had, he would not at that time have left England for America. The error was handed down to the third generation; but now we have got right again. I have a genuine copy of the family arms, taken from the Herald's Office, which I will send you soon. . . .

JOÑ. SEWELL.

BRISTOL, TRINITY STREET, 10th Sep^r, '83.

MY DEAR M^{rs} HIGGINSON, — When I saw your letter, for I well knew your handwriting, dated at Salem, I was as much astonished as if it had been dated at Calcutta or in the moon. I had not received the

¹ Samuel Sewall, of Brookline, a graduate of Harvard College in the Class of 1761, and also a Refugee, went to England, where he died in May, 1811. — Eds.

least hint of your having left Halifax, for which I have given your brother a gentle rap over the knuckles, as he has wrote me two or three letters since your departure, without mentioning it. I heartily rejoice at your being restored to your little freehold & to the arms of your friends, tho' whether I ought to rejoice or to grieve at it, I am at a loss to determine; at present I think you have acted with your usual prudence, and if the Americans by breaking off their connection with G. Britain have established liberty, peace & happiness among themselves, you must, I think, find yourself more agreeably scituated at Salem than you could be at Halifax. If, on the contrary the picture sho^d be reversed, you may possibly be glad to revisit Hal^x. This, however, is in the womb of time. At any rate you have secured your mansion. For myself, tho' I wish the united States may realize all the fancy'd blessings of independence, yet, at present, I am far from hankering after a residence among them. I have many friends, with whom to enjoy one month's friendly social chit-chat I could traverse half the globe on foot, yet such are my ideas of the disunion & the consequent troubles which are yet to come before regular government can be firmly established, and such my abhorrence of the form which must, if any, finally prevail, that, I assure you, if my estate was now to be offered me upon condition of my returning to take possession of it, I would not accept it. So you see, tho' I can't deny my being a *Saint*, yet I am not a St Evremond. I believe all you say about Halifax, & I believe I shall be there next summer, & tho' I sho^d never see my Massachusetts friends, yet it will afford me some pleasure to think I am within four days sail of them; but if I can live on a few years longer, I don't despair of seeing you. The definitive treaty is now signed, & it seems to be an agreed point that our estates are not to be restored to us, & the Devil must be in your people if they won't admit us as transient visitors. I bless Major Handfield & Doct^r Prince for their kindness to you, & if I live to reach Halifax & find them there, they shall have my personal thanks & every grateful return in my power to make. Friend Porter is still living, & in London, as you have heard, but not in health,—at least not in his own opinion. He had for some time perswaded himself, that as all his family were short-liv'd & none of them exceeded a certain age, at which he was to arrive two years ago, in August, he sho^d not get on beyond that period. His anxiety under this perswasion, together with continual gloomy reflections on the loss of his dear bonds & notes in America tormented his mind day & night, & reduced it to a very sickly state, which, as is not uncoñon, was communicated to his body & brought on a spitting of blood & other symptoms of a consumption, but being determined not to yield to that inexorable tyrant, Sergeant Death, in this accursed Sodom, as he very piously calls England, he suddenly embark'd for

Oporto, where he arrived in safety & resolved to lay his bones, but it so fell out, what with the salutary effects of the voyage & what with the change of climate & a plenty of unadulterated wine, peaches, nectarines, grapes, musk- and water-mellons, that his health was re-established, & the much dreaded day in August passed over, & all his melancholy prognostications were falsified; thinking then that he stood an equal chance for longevity with other people, he returned to Sodom, & has remained here ever since. However, his letters inform me that the hemorrhage frequently returns, tho' his friends who have seen him tell me he never look'd better, nor appeared in higher spirits than at present. From my soul I wish him long life, health & happiness, for Porter with all his whims, his oddities, & his quiddities possesseth, I firmly believe, as good, benevolent, honest a heart as ever God gave to man. I wish he could return in safety to Salem, for I am persuaded it would add many years to his life. England is not the climate for which he is calculated. Vauxhall, Ranelagh, the play house, the opera, & many other amusements with which I am enraptured, his soul, like Pococurante's in Voltair's *Candid*, sickens at, & when he is overpersuaded to attend them, instead of relishing those refined entertainments he only growls like Comodore Trunnion, when his wife substituted a bed instead of a hammock. In short all the cities & courts of Europe could not afford him so much solid satisfaction in a century as he would carve out for himself in one hour's talk to Blaney in his dark office behind our Court House. I say, talk to Blaney, because Blaney, you know, never talks, & Porter when he begins talks without ceasing, so that I can't say conversation. You know both the gentlemen & will understand me. I do really wish you & your & his friends would sound George Williams & others of your *great* men, & try what can be done in favor of his return; for I am assured that he can neither live nor die in peace but in Salem, his once happy seat, & in my conscience I believe could he be made to realise the idea of returning thither fifty years hence he would live on that idea to the end of the term in spite of hemorrhages & all pulmonic attacks. He is a man of such truly Parson Adamish honesty & simplicity that they cannot fear any caballings or plottings from him. But he has taken up too much of my paper. Try what can be done, & tell me all about it. My heart is much interested in the matter, because I know it to be almost his only wish, tho' I do not know another American Loyalist now in England, except Aunt Jenny, who would return if they might; she vows to go the very first opportunity. Pray remember me with the warmest affection to M^r & M^{rs} Pyncheon,¹ & tell her that the event has proved that the refugees were not furnished with so good *head-*

¹ Mr. and Mrs. William Pyncheon, of Salem. His diary was edited and published, in 1890, by our late associate, Dr. Fitch Edward Oliver. — Eds.

pieces as those who stuck by the stuff. However, in their names I thank her for her encouraging compliment. I admire her spirit. Tell her also I wish for a letter from her, in which she may give free scope to all the sentiments of her heart. You tell of your gossiping round the neighbourhood with letters from your friends in England, but you must not do so with this. I have wrote too much in a hurry for public inspection; besides I don't know but I have let drop here & there an expression which an ingenious independent American might misinterpret. I have upon your hint wrote to your brother for further intelligence about the projected Academy at Halifax. I have communicated to my sons your kind paragraph respecting them & they thank you, & say you shall positively be their aunt.

You tell me in the beginning of your letter how happy the receipt of my letter of 12th March '82 made you, & yet in the postscript you say you have not received a line from me since the year '80. You will in your next reconcile this seeming contradiction. I believe I should have prevailed on my two boys to write you their grateful acknowledgments of your kind wishes, but this being Bristol fare-week, when, as Yorick says, all the world are running at the ring of pleasure, they could not find time. The Fares in England resemble our Commencements in general, but they differ in this, that at the fares every thing of the wonderful in nature and in art is collected & exhibited. These exhibitions draw together during the term of the Fare, which is ten days in this city, an astonishing number of men, women, & children. Among other exhibitions at this Fare are four giants & 4 dwarfs. Of the giants two are twin brothers, each 8 feet 3 inches in highth, & every part from head to foot in just proportions to their highth. The father of them is 6 feet high, & the mother 6 feet 3 inches. Of the dwarfs one is a male Polander, 38 years of age, 3 feet 3 inches high, & very completely formed; he speaks every language of Europe, is as polite & accomplished in his manners & address as any gentleman I have ever seen; he has a wife of the middling stature, by whom he has two children (have you faith as a grain of mustard seed?); his hands & feet are of the size of a child's at two years of age. Another is a female 3 feet high, & twenty-eight pounds weight; her age about 30; she is as well proportioned as the little Poland gentleman, & is a very sensible little woman. These are curious sportive productions of nature, which, however insipid the subject may be in a literary description, yet I assure you, could you see them with your own eyes, you would be filled with pleasing wonder, but above all could you behold *size ace* together, the little Polander standing by the gygantic Irishman, or, I should rather say, by the side of his leg, for he does not come up to his knee, you could not fail being highly diverted at the very ludicrous contrast.

Now I shall be grievously disappointed if I have not a monstrous

long letter by the very first opportunity. I wish you would touch a little upon politics. I want your opinion upon the present appearance respecting the future government of the united States considered as one confederated people. Must there not be a supreme & controuling power lodged somewhere? Must not this supreme head be vested with a discretionary power to make war in the name of the 13 States? to provide in time of peace against such an event? to discharge the public debt contracted in the late war? and to these ends must not he or they, be it Protector, Stadholder, or Congress, have power to levy taxes & to enforce the payment of them? Will a people who so lately took up arms to avoid a 3 penny duty on an acknowledged luxury of life, & by the help of a great & good ally, overturned a long established government, & one of the mildest on earth, patiently submit to a tax on all the luxuries & many of the necessities of life levy'd by creatures of their own creation but yesterday? Can such a necessary supreme power exist a moment, or their laws ever be carry'd into execution, without a standing army? Will y^e independent Americans tamely submit to be dragooned into submission & compliance by their fellow citizens & countrymen? Will not the disbanding the army be in effect annihilating the supreme authority of Congress, & dissolving the federate union of the 13 States? Will not an attempt to keep up a standing army arouse the jealousy of Leviathan, & like an electric shock communicate to every part of the new body-politic, & bring on mobs, insurrections, anarchy, confusion, & bloodshed? Will not the ancient jealousies, competitions, & enmities between the Northern & Southern States soon break out again, when they have no longer a public cause, the only cement of their union, to keep them in outward good humour? Perhaps, you will say these are *questions not to be ask'd*. Be it so, but were I an inhabitant of the united States, I could not avoid pondering them with anxiety. They contain more of politics than I have indulged myself in writing for some years past, and possibly my concern for the future peace & happiness of my native country suggests fears & doubts which are but chimerical & imaginary. I wish this may prove to be the case. But you must observe this is all only for your perusal; no gossiping with politics. It is in your Land of *Liberty* a subject too sacred to be meddled with by the profane vulgar, tho' in the Land of *Slaves* a cobbler or a chimney sweeper claims & exercises freely, as his undoubted right, the privilege of arraigning, examining, judging & condemning the conduct of the King's Ministers, of the Parliament, & even of the King himself. You are tired; and I am at the end of my letter. Peace & happiness ever attend you & your daughter, in which wish joins my fireside, with

Your sincere friend & affec^o kinsman.

JOÑ. SEWELL.

BRISTOL, 8th Sept, 1785.

DEAR COZ., — I have rec^d your two very friendly l^{rs} of 30 July & 1st Augst, & think myself highly honor^d by the very flattering opinion which you & *one* gentleman of the bar entertain of me, & your wishes that I may succeed your present (or late) Ch. J. But waving all objections which diffidence of my own abilities, qualifications, &c., strongly suggest I have forty other irrefragable & cogent reasons against closing with your friendly proposal, tho', as I am rather straighten'd in point of time, & as by your letters it is clear to demonstration you are at all times in the same predicament, I will content myself for the present, & detain you with two only. 1st, I could not obtain the commission if I would; & 2^{ly}, I would not if I could.

"By method things are best discuss,
Begin we then with reason first."

Had L^d North continued in admⁿ I believe I might have had any thing I could modestly have ask'd, but when he found he could no longer support the American war, he first paved the way for the *glorious* peace which you have heard of I presume, & then like a true minister of state wisely slipt his neck out of the collar, or like a cunning *Fox* retreated to his burrough, & left us poor loyal refugee *geese* all in the lurch. A new king has now arisen who knows not Joseph, or rather who hates Joseph; for M^r Pitt, with a view to his own glory, the only principle upon which, if we may believe the majority in the herd of divines, the deity himself ever acts, was in the first outset of his career in the opposition to L^d North, — not I suppose that he had any spleen or malice against L^d N. as L^d N., but merely as Minister, & had it been the Lord Jehovah it would undoubtedly have been the same. In this by the way, I would not be understood to suggest, or even squint at an opinion of M^r Pitt's acting upon principles different from those which actuated the great L^d Chatham, the greater S^r Robert Walpole, or the still greater Burleigh. No, no, they all, both in getting into & keeping the saddle, ever did, & ever will, proceed upon the invariable divine principle of promoting their own glory. M^r P. being thus necessitated to oppose L^d N. must of course, as he ever did, condemn the measures taken against America. Having now mounted the saddle his avowed principles must be uniform; he can't, therefore, you see, be a friend to the loyalists who exerted themselves to support L. North's measures in America, and consequently I can have no interest with him. Which was to be dem. Reason 2nd, I would not if I could. I must first observe here, that I could not expect to hold my commission as J. of the Adm^{ty} & recieve that of C. J., & the former is certainly preferable in point of profit, but further I will let you into a secret which you must keep sacred, till I write you again, even from your wife & your walls. You must read it as a good Christian ejacu-

lates his prayers; it must not rise to a whisper; but you will say, if I can't keep my own secrets, how can I expect you to keep them? True. Therefore I'll e'en keep it myself, but I'll let you know it in my next, or when I see you, & it will then be no secret. That's good Irish, you say, but positively it is sterling English, as you will see.

I have long talk'd of going to Halifax, but my impediments are now removed, & you may rely on it that life & health, wind & weather permitting, I shall certainly embark bag & baggage in April next. I assure you I am tired of England, & earnestly long once more to see you & others of my old American friends & acquaintance, I mean in Nov. Sco. & N. Brun.; for as for those in the 13 States, 2 or 3 excepted, I have not a wish to see a devil of them in this world or the next. I wish them no harm. God bless them, I say, but as either world is wide enough for us all, without jostling, I wish to keep clear of them to all eternity.

I have never heard how you stand with respect to the real & personal property you left at Mbhead. Two of the commissioners upon the American claims are now gone or going out for N. Sco., in order to examine the claims of the Loyalists there. If you are a sufferer, I mean a loser of property, you will put in your claim, & will undoubtedly get something in recompense; but in what proportion, I can't pretend to say. However, you know y^e old proverb, *half a loaf*. Get what you can by all fair means. I believe I shall send to your care a small package for my son at S^t John's, which you will be kind enough to forward. I have paid the £10 agreeable to your direction, that is, I have not paid it, but I gave orders to my agent in London to pay it out of my salary which became due in April last, & from some new arrangements at the Treasury has not yet been paid. However, it will now be paid in a few days. I congratulate you, for I know you will rejoice, that I have nothing more to add, but that with my best regards to your fireside, I am

Your affec^o kinsman & friend

JOÑ. SEWELL.

M^R ROBIE.

Rev. HENRY F. JENKS communicated from the papers of Rev. Dr. Benjamin Colman, of the Brattle Street Church, Boston, two unpublished letters written respectively by Rev. George Whitefield and Rev. Jonathan Edwards. They are as follows:—

LONDON, Aug^t 10th 1743.

REVND & D^R S^R — Glad was I last night to receive a letter from your hands. It refreshed my soul to find the mutual intercourse of love & friendship which our Saviour has wrought between me & the d^r New England people kept up & maintained. It is begun in time,

but will continue I trust to an endless eternity. I never forget them or their ministers. They are always upon my heart & I long to see them face to face. Hitherto the door has been shut, but now begins to be opening for my going to America. My d^r wife is near the time of her travail. As soon as she is able to go abroad I purpose to embark for America. I have seen Mr. Hutchinson's information concerning the Orphan-house. I scarce have ever seen so small a paragraph filled with so many great and flagrant lies. Poor man. I pity him. You do well Revnd S^r to give little credit to it. For indeed it is worthy of no credit at all. Did I think it necessary I could give it an explicate answer, but I shall send it to M^r Habersham who in a letter from Charlestown dated June 6th informs me that all w[as] [*a word or two torn out*] [From?] others I hear fourty Dutch family had settled near the Orphan house & that [*one or two words torn out*] been visited with a remarkable effu[sion] of the Holy Spirit. D^r M^r Smith of [Cha]rlestown writes to me about the same [*a word torn out by breaking the seal*] & tells me He was then going to visit the Orphan-house. Ere this reaches you I suppose you will have received accounts from him. [I] am glad I put the burning bush at the bottom of the Orphan-house plan. Surely it [w]ill flourish unconsumed in fire. I thank you Rev^d D^r for your tender sympathy on account of the reproach I have met with for the sake of Jesus Xt. Blessed be his name, it has been sweet to my soul & as afflictions have abounded consolations have much more abounded. I think my bodily health is better than it has been these seven years, & deeply feel the truth of that promise They [that] wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. I am much obliged to Doctor Watts for his great kindness. I see him as often as I well ca[n] which is but seldom, but I hear he is now much indisposed. Blessed be God I can yet send you good news concerning the progress of the Gospel. Both in England and Wales the word runs & is glorified very much. I find the work is not quite at a stop among you. I am glad d^r M^r Prince is printing a weekly History & I long to see d^r Mr. Edwards's last book. I w^d write to him, d^r M^r Cooper & some other dear & honrd Friends, [wou]ld time and business permit, but I am called away to an Association of the English Brethren. However be pleased Revnd S^r to salute all in the most cordial manner & assure them that without seeing I [make] mention of them in my prayers. My d^r wife joins in returning her most hearty salutations with me who am Revnd & D^r S^r

Your very affec. Younger Brother & Ser^{vt} in the Gospel of our
Glorious Emanuel

G W

I have deliver'd your message to M^r Mason. I hope my particular respects will find acceptance with the Honourable Governour Belcher, Esq^r Willard, M^r Welsh, my d^r host & hostess & all other particular & intimate friends.

NORTHAMPTON, May 22, 1744.

REV'D & HONOURED SIR, — It has been our manner in this congregation, for more than two years past, in the summer time, when we sing three times upon the Sabbath, to sing an Hymn, or part of a Hymn of Dr. Watts's, the last time, *viz*: at the conclusion of the afternoon exercise. I introduced it principally because I saw in the people a very general inclination to it: indeed I was not properly he that introduced it: they began it in my absence on a journey; and seem'd to be greatly pleased with it; and sang nothing else, & neglected the Psalms wholly. When I came home I disliked not their making some use of the Hymns: but did not like their setting aside the Psalms; and therefore used them principally, and continued the singing of the Hymns only in the manner that I have spoken of, and thus we continued to use them: which at first I suppose, was to universal satisfaction: and [so] it continued to be till very lately, excepting one [m]an, one Mr Root; he after a little while manifest[ing] a disgust, not by coming to me to say anything [to] me, but by turning his back on that part of [our] publick worship from time to time, and [going] out of the meeting House. There was no appearance of dislike in any other person that I know of, 'till lately I have heard some other persons have appear'd not well pleased: which I suppose principally arises from what Mr Root says you said to him concerning our singing those Hymns, more than a twelve-month ago, and a message that he says you desired him to deliver to me (tho' he never deliver'd it, or informed me of it 'till yesterday) He says that he went to you on purpose to talk with you on the affair, and that you charged him with this message to me, once and again, "Tell Mr Edwards from me, that I desire that he would by no means sing Dr. Watts's Hymns." This message which Mr Root has spoken much of to others tho' he did not deliver it to me, has I believe made some difficulty: and because I was ready to think there was some mistake, and it is pity that trouble should arise among us from nothing, I thought it would be best to write to you, that I might know the certainty. Therefore I would pray you Honoured Sir, to inform me whether Mr. Root did not mistake you, by writing briefly to me concerning this matter. Herein, Honoured Sir, you will much oblige

Your already greatly obliged son and servant

JONATHAN EDWARD[s]

Mr. JAMES F. RHODES, having been called on by the President, then read the following paper: —

The First Six Weeks of McClellan's Peninsular Campaign.

If one desires to read a chapter of blunders, or wishes to show how costly it is for a peace-loving people devoted to an industrial civilization to learn the lesson of war, or if he would have an example how decisive events fail of accomplishment wholly for the lack of a great general, let him read the story of McClellan's Peninsular Campaign. The plan itself was an unfortunate one. Not that from a military point of view it was inherently bad, for that contention is probably disposed of by the fact that twice and perhaps thrice during its attempted execution the chances were more than even that McClellan's noble and faithful army would go into Richmond had he given the word of attack, and had he been present on the field of battle to issue the orders and to make the disposition of forces that hardly would have failed to suggest themselves to a man of his technical training. The plan of the Peninsular Campaign was an unfortunate one, from the fact that the President's consent to it had actually been wrung from him, his objection being that to make the advance upon Richmond via Fortress Monroe and the Peninsula between the York and James rivers, deprived Washington of the protection of the main Federal army. Had McClellan been a man who looked at facts as they were instead of as he wished them to be, he would have appreciated that he could not expect as perfect co-operation from Lincoln as if he had determined upon a direct advance overland to Richmond, which was the plan favored by the President, and which at least had equal military merit with the other. The second blunder lay in the misunderstanding between Lincoln and McClellan as to the proper force which should be left to protect Washington, and which resulted in the withdrawal from the General's command of McDowell's corps of 35,000 men. Yet, as it is the consensus of opinion that it was the lack of generalship and not the lack of men which caused the failure of the campaign, that failure may not be imputed to the President for doing what, in his best judgment, was necessary to do for the safety of the capital.

April 2, 1862, McClellan reached Fortress Monroe. April 3, according to his own figures, he had with him ready to move 58,000 men; and the rest of his force, which he main-

tains made his effective total but 85,000, and which the President insisted made 108,000, was coming to him as fast as transports could bring them from Alexandria. April 4 the army began to move, and the next day appeared along the whole front of the Confederate line, which stretched from Yorktown across to the James River, a distance of thirteen miles. To hold this line Magruder had 11,000 men, and his reinforcements were arriving very slowly. McClellan's general report, written August 4, 1863, confirmed as it is by a private letter written to his wife when he was before Yorktown, makes it clear that he entertained a simple and correct plan of operations, which was by rapid movements to drive the enemy before him, open the James River, advance on Richmond, and attack it before the Confederate army of Northern Virginia could receive large reinforcements. Political as well as military considerations favored such a course. The Union victories in the Southwest, chief of which was the capture of Fort Donelson, had caused gloom and demoralization in the capital of the Confederacy, and the recovery from the depression had at this time only begun. A quick advance menacing Richmond would have intensified the dismay of its citizens. McClellan was before the Confederate line of Yorktown with 58,000 troops, reinforcements constantly arriving, and that line was defended by only 11,000. Why did he not make an attack? "Instant assault," he wrote, August 4, 1863, "would have been simple folly." Several excellent authorities maintain, on the contrary, that it would have been the highest wisdom. Indeed, no knowledge of military criticism is necessary to see that unless an army of 58,000 could break through a long line defended by only 11,000, it had no business to venture on an offensive movement. Moreover, McClellan had the authority of his government to make an assault,—and in a war waged by a republic such backing ought to be grateful to its general. April 6 the President telegraphed him, "I think you better break the enemy's line from Yorktown to Warwick River at once." The General had a profound contempt for the opinion of the Washington authorities, and in his answer piled up the difficulties with which he had to contend, and complained of the inadequacy of his force. To his wife, with whom he shared his inmost thoughts, he wrote: "The President very coolly telegraphed me yesterday that he

thought I had better break the enemy's lines at once ! I was much tempted to reply that he had better come and do it himself." April 9 Lincoln wrote McClellan the noble, pathetic, and sensible letter which is often reproduced or quoted from, and which contains as a direction for the future the remark, "It is indispensable to you that you strike a blow." The young general failed to take the course which every consideration prompted, from two defects in the working of his mind. He was irresolute ; he habitually overestimated the force of the enemy. For a conceited man and an unsuccessful general, McClellan wrote and talked too much, and he had at this time various opinions as to the strength of the enemy he must encounter ; but, April 7, he was sure that General Joseph E. Johnston had arrived in Yorktown with strong reinforcements, and that he should have the whole force of the enemy on his hands, which was probably not less than 100,000. It is quite true that as soon as McClellan began his advance towards Yorktown reinforcements commenced to arrive for Magruder, so that by April 11 he had an aggregate of 31,500 ; but by this time the Union army reached the number of 100,000 men present for duty. Up to this date, therefore, there was no time when McClellan had not three men to one of the Confederates. April 17, Joseph E. Johnston took command in person at Yorktown of an army which had then reached the number of 53,000. McClellan had missed the golden opportunity for an assault, and perhaps from this time on nothing could have been better than a continuance of the scientific siege operations which he began soon after his arrival before Yorktown.

He went on erecting siege-works and planting heavy Parrott guns and mortars against the Confederate fortifications, maintaining all the while a lively correspondence with the department at Washington and with his wife at home. In his letters to the President and the Secretary of War he resented bitterly that McDowell's corps had been withdrawn from his command ; he complained of the smallness of his own force, and intimated that he was outnumbered by the Confederates ; he had much to say of the rainy weather and of the roads deep with mud. To his worshipping and devoted wife he told of the disadvantages he was laboring under and of his many troubles in a tone that at times degenerated into childishness ; some of his letters indeed sound as if they had come from a

youth not yet grown rather than from the captain of a great army. When not childish, he is pursued by phantoms. Not only "the rebels," but "the abolitionists and other scoundrels," are aiming at his ruin. It is the men at Washington to whom he refers when he writes: "History will present a sad record of these traitors who are willing to sacrifice the country and its army for personal spite and personal aims." The President, yearning for the success of McClellan and eager to do everything to effect it, sent him Franklin's division of McDowell's corps; this reached him April 22. Still McClellan did not open a general attack from his batteries. April 28 he called for some 30-pounder Parrott guns from Washington, which brought forth this answer from the President: "Your call . . . alarms me chiefly because it argues indefinite procrastination. Is anything to be done?"

Turning from the contemplation of the Union general to Johnston, one is impressed with the good fortune of the South in having an able commander for its principal army at the commencement of the war, instead of being obliged, as was the case of the North, to grope about in a painful search, through bitter trial and sickening failure, of a general fit to lead the Army of the Potomac. Johnston coolly watched the operations of his adversary, and, surprised that at first he had not assaulted the Confederate line and now pleased that he delayed the bombardment, wrote, with a certain measure of contempt to Lee, "No one but McClellan could have hesitated to attack." When these elaborate siege operations were nearly completed, the Confederate general decided that Yorktown was untenable, and on the 3d of May evacuated it and the adjacent defensive works, with the intention of withdrawing his army to the neighborhood of Richmond. Magruder and Johnston had gained a month, — a delay of inestimable value to the Confederate cause. During that month the Richmond Congress passed the Conscription Act; the work of the reorganization of the Confederate army and the training of the Virginia militia went on.

The evacuation of Yorktown took McClellan by surprise. Anticipating serious resistance, he had expected three days later to open with his batteries. Nevertheless he gave orders for immediate pursuit, while he himself remained at Yorktown to superintend the embarkation of Franklin's division on trans-

ports which should go up the York River. Hooker with his division overtook the enemy, and began the battle of Williamsburg, which was fought without a plan, under confused orders and defective disposition of forces, and which, though somewhat relieved by a brilliant exploit of Hancock, then commander of a brigade, resulted in a Union defeat and considerable loss. McClellan arrived on the field at about five o'clock in the afternoon, receiving, as he always did, loud and enthusiastic cheers from his men; but the battle of Williamsburg was over. He made a disposition of forces for the conflict which he expected would be renewed on the morrow, but that night the Confederates marched away from Williamsburg in pursuance of their retreat to Richmond. McClellan followed with almost incredible slowness. From Williamsburg to the place where his army went into camp on the Chickahominy, a distance of forty to fifty miles, it took him a fortnight to march. The roads of course were bad. In a somewhat merry mood, he enlivens his book with an anecdote of which he more than once thought during this campaign, and from which he might have drawn an apposite lesson. McClellan asked an old general of Cossacks, who had served in all the Russian campaigns against Napoleon, how the roads were in those days. "My son," he replied, "the roads are always bad in war." Virginia mud is a factor which must be taken into account in the consideration of many campaigns; but the young general exaggerated the inclemency of the weather and the difficulty of the roads, even as he did the force of the enemy. Lincoln, undoubtedly weary of this constant grumbling, and observing that the Confederates marched in spite of bad roads and made attacks in spite of rough weather, once wittily said, "McClellan seemed to think, in defiance of Scripture, that Heaven sent its rain only on the just, and not on the unjust."

On the morning of May 11, when nineteen miles beyond Williamsburg, McClellan learned that the Confederates had evacuated Norfolk and destroyed the iron-clad "Merrimac." This opened up the James River to the Federal vessels and gunboats, and should, by the highest military considerations, have suggested to him that that river offered the more advantageous line of advance on Richmond, making available as it did the co-operation of the navy, avoiding the fever-breathing swamps

of the Chickahominy, and threatening the most important communication of the Confederate capital with the States farther South. McClellan is wise after the event, and in his report of August 4, 1863, and in his book acknowledges that the approach to Richmond by the James was a safer and surer route than the one adopted; but with his incapacity to admit that he ever made a mistake, he ascribes his evident failure in strategy to the administration at Washington. Repeatedly asking for reinforcements, he sent, May 14, to the President a respectful and reasonable despatch, the gist of which was, "I ask for every man that the War Department can send me by water." Four days later the Secretary of War replied that while the President did not deem it wise to uncover the capital entirely by sending the forces available by the water route, he had, however, ordered McDowell with his thirty-five or forty thousand men to march from his camp opposite Fredericksburg overland, and join the Army of the Potomac either north or south of the Pamunkey River; and he directed McClellan to extend his right wing north of Richmond, in order to establish this communication as soon as possible. "This command," declares McClellan, "is the reason why I did not operate on the line of the James." Yet the statement is effectually disproved by his official and private correspondence at the time, in which there is not the slightest allusion to a desire to make such a movement; in fact, the tenor of all his despatches and letters is that he expected to fight Johnston's army between the Chickahominy River and Richmond. Moreover, he knew of the destruction of the "Merrimac," May 11, and he did not get the notice of the promised reinforcement by McDowell until the 18th, giving him a full week to consider and adopt the plan of moving on to Richmond by the line of the James River, which he had unhampered power to do, and which is exactly what he should have done.

As soon as the destruction of the "Merrimac" was known, the "Monitor" and several gunboats started up the James. Their approach to Richmond caused more of a panic in that city than did any direct menace of McClellan's army of a hundred thousand during the whole of the Peninsular campaign. There were indeed anxious hearts in the capital city when the Union troops first appeared before Yorktown; but when McClellan,

instead of attacking the Confederates, went on with his scientific siege operations, anxiety gave way to wonder, and to contempt for his generalship. The fall of New Orleans was a blow, and the destruction, a fortnight later, of the "Merimac," — "that great gift of God and of Virginia to the South,"¹ — seemed disaster crowding upon disaster. While McClellan's military ability was despised, the march towards the capital of the Confederacy of his well trained and equipped army could not be looked on without apprehension. While there was a quiet confidence in Johnston, strictures on Jefferson Davis were not uncommon. Of him who became the greatest Southern commander, and who was now acting as military adviser to his President, the Richmond "Examiner" said: "Evacuating Lee, who has never yet risked a single battle with the invader, is commanding general"; and after Yorktown had been given up, it sneered at "the bloodless and masterly strategy of Lee." We must bear all these circumstances in mind to understand the trepidation with which the people heard that the "Monitor" and the Federal gunboats were at City Point, afterwards within twelve miles, and then within eight miles of Richmond. Davis had himself baptized at home, and the rite of confirmation administered to him in the Episcopal church of St. Paul's. He had appointed by public proclamation a day for solemn prayer. A victim to anxiety, he insisted that his wife and family should go to Raleigh. The families of the Cabinet Secretaries fled to their homes. These facts, and the adjournment of the Confederate Congress the previous month, seemed to lend confirmation to a report now gaining ground that Richmond would be abandoned. The packing of trunks was the work of every household; refugees crowded the railroad trains. People fled in panic from the city, with nothing but the clothes they had on; and their action was not from baseless fear. New Orleans they thought had been ignobly surrendered. What should save Richmond? Davis's letters to his wife breathe discouragement. "I have told the people," he wrote, "that the enemy might be beaten before Richmond or on either flank, and we would try to do it, but that I could not allow the army to be penned up in a city." The evidence seems good that the government archives had been sent to Lynchburg and to Columbia.

¹ Richmond Examiner, May 13.

May 15 the "Monitor" and the Federal gunboats reached Drewry's Bluff, eight miles below Richmond on the James River. There they encountered a heavy battery and two separate barriers formed of spiles, steamboats, and sail-vessels, and found the banks of the river lined with sharpshooters. As the boats advanced, the Confederates opened fire; this was soon returned, and the battle was on. Richmond heard the sound of the guns, yet consternation did not reign. The panic-stricken had left the city, and resolute citizens had stemmed the current of alarm. The day previous, the General Assembly of the Commonwealth resolved that the capital should be defended to the last extremity, and appointed a committee to assure President Davis that all loss of property by the State and by the citizens involved in such a determination would be cheerfully submitted to. Davis said to the committee: "It will be the effort of my life to defend the soil of Virginia and to cover her capital. I have never entertained the thought of withdrawing the army from Virginia and abandoning the State. If the capital should fall, the necessity of which I do not see or anticipate, the war could still be successfully maintained on Virginia soil for twenty years." To the sound of the enemy's guns Governor Letcher affixed his hand and seal to a call for a meeting at the City Hall for the purpose of providing for the defence of Richmond. Before the time of the meeting the news came that the Federal gunboats had been repulsed; and this added joy to the enthusiasm with which the citizens assembled listened to the pledges of the Governor and the Mayor, that the city should never be surrendered. Confidence was restored, and not again during this campaign of McClellan was it so rudely disturbed. There had been a fine chance for an energetic Union general who knew his enemy. After the naval engagement of May 15 it was the opinion of Seward, then on a visit to the scene of operations, that a force of soldiers to co-operate with the navy on the James River "would give us Richmond without delay." While McClellan failed to take advantage of the favors which fortune lavished upon him, the public of the Confederacy, as well as its generals, learned to comprehend this Fabian commander, and could not conceal their derision at his lack of enterprise.

If the hopeful North and the anxious South could have

known McClellan's inward thoughts during these days, there would have been reason neither for hope on one side nor anxiety on the other. In his letters to his wife he spoke of his defeat at Williamsburg as a "brilliant victory," and asserted that he had given the Confederates "a tremendous thrashing." May 12 he asked, "Are you satisfied now with my bloodless victories?" And, May 15, he wrote, "I think that the blows the rebels are now receiving and have lately received ought to break them up."

This is the story of six weeks, or of one-half of the Peninsular Campaign; for it was confessedly a failure when in the last days of June McClellan retreated with his shattered army to the James River. In the two battles of Fair Oaks and Gaines's Mill, fought almost a month apart, his tactics were timid and disjointed. He showed himself incompetent to manage an army of one hundred thousand. Nor is this surprising. In June, 1862, it may well be doubted whether in either the Union or the Confederate army there was an officer who could handle such an army to the very best advantage. From Savannah, in January, 1865, William T. Sherman wrote his brother, saying that he did not care to accept the commission of Lieutenant-General. "Of military titles," he added, "I have now the maximum, and it makes no difference whether that be Major-General or Marshal. It means the same thing. I have commanded one hundred thousand men in battle and on the march successfully and without confusion, and that is enough for my reputation." This letter suggests what may be said in defence of McClellan. It is nevertheless certain that in June, 1862, there were several men South and several men North who could have handled that army better than did McClellan.

The consideration of McClellan's mistakes does not exhaust the chapter of blunders. Stonewall Jackson's brilliant raid into the Shenandoah valley brings into relief the blunders of Banks and of Frémont. It shows, too, that the story of this campaign cannot be truly told without animadverting on the error of the President in putting such men as Banks and Frémont into places of military responsibility.

Mr. JOHN C. ROPES spoke extemporaneously, in substance as follows:—

It is curious to note the existence in General McClellan's mind of a lack of precaution in dealing with certain subjects, and an excessive caution in dealing with others. We have just had our attention called to his extraordinary hesitation to attack the enemy's lines on the Peninsula, when he had everything to gain and really nothing to lose; but attention is not often drawn to the fact that in going to the Peninsula at all, after the "Merrimac" had come out, he was taking a very great risk. I have always believed that if the "Merrimac" had been well handled by a daring and capable officer, she might have come out from Norfolk and destroyed the transports and vessels which were carrying ammunition, food, and forage to McClellan's army. For a month McClellan's army was situated on the extremity of a peninsula, the enemy's lines from Yorktown to the James River shutting it in on the west, and the formidable "Merrimac" able to come out of Elizabeth River at any time,—so far, at least, as his information went,—and, unless restrained by the "Monitor," able to destroy the wooden vessels, upon whose safe arrival at Fortress Monroe and other landing-places, the very salvation of the army depended.

In connection with what has been said by Mr. Rhodes about General Joseph E. Johnston, I would say that it was Johnston's plan, on falling back from the Rapidan to Richmond in the latter part of March, to retain his army in the neighborhood of Richmond, to husband his resources, to rest his troops, to give them every advantage of drill and discipline and proper supplies, and to secure for them reinforcements, which he urged President Davis to draw from all parts of the Southern Confederacy. But Davis—between whom and Johnston there existed a quarrel, arising out of Davis's having disregarded Johnston's claims to the highest rank in the Confederate army, based upon his having held the position of brigadier-general in the old army—was not inclined to attribute much weight to Johnston's suggestions; and, supported by General Lee, who was at that time acting as military adviser to the President of the Confederacy, Davis insisted upon Johnston's taking his whole army down to the lines at Yorktown, where the troops suffered a great deal from exposure and privation, from insufficient shelter from the weather, and from remaining for weeks in a malarious climate. During the retreat from York-

town to Richmond, Johnston complained that his army was in such a condition that it would take him two days to get it ready for a general action.

In regard to the orders given by Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton to Generals McDowell and Frémont in the latter part of May, to intercept Stonewall Jackson, who was making a raid in the Shenandoah valley, I would say that the popular impression, that this action on the part of the President and Secretary was not taken until Jackson had driven Banks to the borders of the Potomac, is erroneous. The orders were issued on the 24th of May, the day before the battle of Winchester. This shows conclusively that this action was not dictated by fear of invasion, but rather by an expectation on the part of the administration of accomplishing a brilliant strategic operation.

I would say that with the substance of Mr. Rhodes's paper I entirely concur.

In an informal discussion which followed, the Hon. WILLIAM EVERETT, the PRESIDENT, Dr. SAMUEL A. GREEN, the Hon. T. JEFFERSON COOLIDGE, Mr. GAMALIEL BRADFORD, the Hon. EDWARD L. PIERCE, Mr. HENRY LEE, Mr. WILLIAM R. THAYER, and the Hon. MELLE CHAMBERLAIN took part.

To show that Mr. Rhodes's opinion was not universally accepted, Mr. Coolidge related the following anecdote: Some seventeen or eighteen years ago I was in New Orleans, and happened to be at the same hotel with Gen. Joseph E. Johnston. . . . I breakfasted with him alone several days in succession; and as neither of us was busy, we used to chat on the war and the various commanders. One day he asked me whom I considered the greatest general that had fought on our side. I said that for military talent I placed Thomas above all the other commanders, and went on to give my reasons. He listened quietly, but said that in his judgment McClellan was the best informed and most able general of the Northern armies. Imagine my surprise. Nor can I account for his opinion, which he repeated on several occasions, except by supposing that the knowledge of the military art and of strategy was what he considered great, rather than success, which had not been granted to himself, however much he deserved it.